



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 1 December 1967



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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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DAILY BRIEF
1 DECEMBER 1967

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2. North Vietnam

There now is some evidence that two North Vietnamese divisions may be moving south. [REDACTED]

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Several months may be needed to complete this unprecedented deployment and it still is too early to say just where these divisions may take up positions. The two northernmost provinces of South Vietnam would seem prime candidates.

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4. South Vietnam

The Communists appear to have established a major "front" command group in two III Corps provinces on the Cambodian border (see map). The organization of a "front" permits better coordination among various units in areas of concentrated Communist military activity. Other "fronts" have been in existence for some time in the Western Highlands and in the area of the Demilitarized Zone.

We began seeing signs of the new "front" late last summer. More recently, we have noted other signs that the Communists are trying to set up a main force enclave in the new area. 3.3(h)(2)

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5. Cambodia

From all accounts, Sihanouk was sent into an emotional tailspin by the US newsmen's discovery of the Viet Cong base camp in Cambodia. 3.3(h)(2)

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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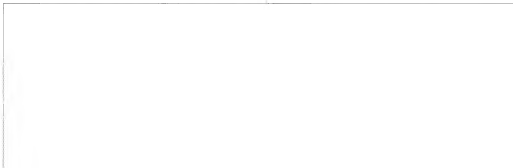
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1 December 1967

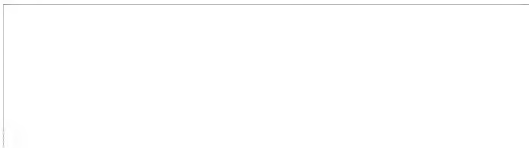
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

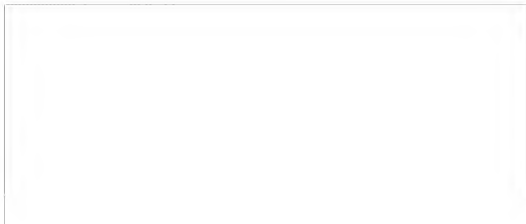


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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on McNamara: A Hanoi International Service broadcast in English yesterday asserts that the reported "dismissal" of Defense Secretary McNamara is "another proof of the deadlock" of the US Government's war strategy in Vietnam and of the "sharp contradictions among the ringleaders of the US aggressors." Hanoi claims that the "dismissal" will be a "personal disgrace" for Secretary McNamara, as well as "a setback for the whole Johnson clique in their obdurate pursuance of the war of aggression in Vietnam." The broadcast also claims that McNamara's departure will make the picture of the "US war" gloomier than ever. The broadcast closes by stating that the Hanoi army daily Quan Doi Nhan Dan has predicted that whoever the new Defense Secretary is, "he will certainly invite ignominious failure on himself should he follow the beaten track of criminal aggression."

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Stokely in Denmark: According to a report from the US Embassy in Copenhagen, Stokely Carmichael briefly attended the tenth open session of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal on 29 November. He was reportedly warmly welcomed by the first witness of the day, North Vietnamese Minister of Health Pham Ngoc Thach, for his fight against racial discrimination in the US and for creating solidarity between American and Vietnamese people. Carmichael departed for Oslo on the 30th promising to return to Copenhagen on 1 December.

Hanoi Comment on Westmoreland Program: North Vietnam's army daily published a lengthy and scornful commentary on 26 November refuting point by point General Westmoreland's four-phased program for victory in Vietnam. The main theme is that Westmoreland's assertions are false and that the "defeated general" is being used not to fight the war, but to fight US public opinion.

The daily acknowledges that in phase one US intervention saved the South Vietnamese "puppets" from defeat, but asserts that this paved the way for an even bigger "strategic defeat of the Americans." Even in phase one, says the daily, the US suffered because the South Vietnamese were unable to carry their share of the load, and because the "developing people's war" forced the allies to split up into smaller units. Above all, the US failed to achieve its "number one strategic objective of breaking the backbone of the Viet Cong." This failure, said the commentary, brought about the defeat of all the tasks which Westmoreland had set for the first phase.

Regarding the second phase, the commentary says that Westmoreland's report shows the "Americans are retreating," while Communist forces have not only preserved their units, but have also developed these units into division-sized ones. It claims the US was dealt an "unexpected strategic blow" in 1966 when it had to divert troops to the Demilitarized Zone area to cope with the Communist offensive there.

In describing the current situation, the commentary quotes an unnamed US journalist as saying recently that the Communists have the initiative and are capable of engaging in coordinated actions on a nationwide scale. US strategy, the commentary claims, has gone from crisis to stalemate, and the winter-spring campaign is proving that the US military situation has deteriorated and that US strategy is deadlocked.

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